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SUBJECT: GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL CHAIR HANDOVER - OPPORTUNITY TO
PASS MESSAGES TO GCC LEADERSHIP

11. (SBU) Oman holds the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) chair for the year 2009. Following GCC practice, the year ends with a flurry of ministerial meetings ramping up to the leaders' meeting. The Chairmen of GCC Audit Institutions (ministerial level) met in Muscat on October 24, the GCC Ministers of Culture met on October 26 in Muscat, and the GCC Ministers of Interior met in Muscat on October 27. Also on October 27, the GCC Navy Chiefs (plus Red Sea bordering states) met in Jeddah, but not in the GCC context. The GCC Undersecretaries of Health met in Muscat on November 1 (discussing H1N1 planning) and the GCC Ministers and Undersecretaries of Defense (GCC Joint Defense Council) also met in Muscat on November 1.

12. (SBU) The final ministerial, penultimate to the leaders' meeting, will be the GCC Foreign Ministers' meeting in Kuwait, the next GCC chair, on November 17. This year the GCC Secretary General, Abd al Rahman bin Hamad al 'Attiya will also hold a separate, special meeting in Doha on November 3 to discuss "Qatar Vision" on bolstering cooperation and integration among GCC states. The GCC Summit is expected in mid-December. Embassy Muscat advises these dates for timing purposes if the Department and other Washington agencies wish to pass messages to GCC states.
Schmierer